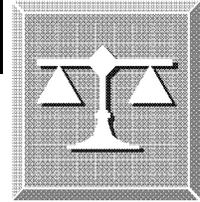


TS-52 June 1964

**General Schedule
Position Classification Standards**



WCPS-2 August 2002

**POSITION CLASSIFICATION
STANDARD
FOR
AGRICULTURAL
MARKETING SERIES,
GS-1146**



**Workforce Compensation
and Performance Service**



Agricultural Marketing Series

GS-1146

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SERIES DEFINITION¹

This series includes positions involving management, research, analytical, regulatory, or other specialized work concerned with the marketing of one or more agricultural commodities or products. The work requires a practical knowledge of marketing functions and practices, including, for example, a knowledge of or experience with the commodity exchanges and markets, agricultural trade, or the practices and methods involved in various agricultural marketing or agribusiness operations, or a knowledge of the requirements of one or more statutory provisions relating to an agricultural marketing program.

This standard supersedes the standard which was originally issued in June 1949 under the title and code of Agricultural Marketing Specialist Series, CAF-1160. It also supersedes the fly sheets for the Agricultural Marketing Specialist Series, GS-1146, which were issued in March 1952, September 1954, December 1955, and October 1958.

EXCLUSIONS

1. Work involving segments of marketing activities for which intensive specialized knowledge are required, provision for which has been made in other series. For example: collecting, analyzing, and disseminating current information relating to the marketing of agricultural products (see the [Agricultural Market Reporting Series, GS-1147](#)); or, determining and certifying the grade, class, or other essential factors relating to quality, quantity and condition of agricultural commodities in accordance with official standards and regulations (see the [Agricultural Commodity Grading Series, GS-1980](#)).
2. Work which requires the application of professional, scientific or engineering knowledge in the solution of problems relative to the marketing of agricultural products. Such positions are classifiable to appropriate series in the [Engineering and Architecture Group, GS-0800](#), the [Physical Sciences Group, GS-1300](#), or the [Biological Sciences Group, GS-0400](#). For example: positions requiring the services of a professionally trained botanist are classifiable to the [Botany Series, GS-0430](#).

¹ This standard was prepared by the Office of Personnel Management in cooperation with the Department of Agriculture.

3. Work which requires application of a professional knowledge of economics in the performance of duties that include: research into economic phenomena, analysis of economic data, and the preparation of interpretive reports; advice and consultation on economic matters to governmental officials and private organizations or citizens. Positions involving such work are classifiable to the [Economist Series, GS-0110](#).

(*Note:* A further discussion of the duties of an Agricultural Economist, and the occupational relationship between Economists and Agricultural Marketing Specialists, is included in the introductory remarks in the classification standard for the Economist Series, GS-0110).

4. Work involved in the provision of transportation services to the Government or in the regulation of transportation utilities by the Government. (See the separate series established under the [Transportation Group, GS-2100](#).)
5. Work involving agricultural commodities or products, which is not primarily concerned with the marketing of such items (orderly marketing includes, e.g., standardization, regulation or stabilization of marketing activities). (See other series established under the [Business and Industry Group, GS-1100](#); the [Commodity Quality Control, Inspection and Grading Group, GS-1900](#); and the [Supply Group, GS-2000](#).)
6. Investigative or enforcement work primarily concerned with alleged or suspected offenses against the laws of the United States, or such work concerned with determining compliance with laws and regulations, when a knowledge of agricultural marketing practices is *not a paramount requirement* for performing the duties of the position (see the [General Investigating Series, GS-1810](#), or the [Criminal Investigating Series, GS-1811](#)).
7. Work of a clerical nature which does not involve the application of a practical knowledge of marketing functions and practices. (See the various specialized clerical series.)

ELEMENTS OF AGRICULTURAL MARKETING

"Marketing" is defined as the aggregate of functions involved in transferring title and in moving goods from producer to consumer. Agricultural marketing² includes such processes as assembling the raw commodities, grading, packaging, transportation, preparation for use, storage, shifting and sharing risks, change in ownership, pricing and exchange, wholesaling and retailing.

One of the first steps in agricultural marketing is assembling the raw commodities. It may begin with country buyers or at the local creamery, country elevator, buying station, cotton gin, cotton or fruit warehouse, or local processing plant. It may begin at interior or central stockyards, elevators or warehouses. It may begin when farmers offer their products for direct sale at farmers' markets or large retail outlets.

Transportation becomes a major factor at the start of assembling and continues to be important throughout almost all phases of marketing. A network of railways, waterways, airways, highways, assembly yards and transfer points, manned around the clock by truck drivers and engineers, conductors and captains, pilots, trainmen, dispatchers, and signalmen, carries the goods to intermediate processing and distribution points and to final markets.

Most agricultural commodities are *processed* in some way. Some fruits and vegetables are canned, dried or frozen. Meat animals are slaughtered, cut up, and chilled. Wheat is ground, and the flour is baked into bread. Soybeans are crushed, and the oil is made into margarine and shortening; the meal is used for livestock feed or refined for high-protein flour. Cotton is spun into thread and yarn; the yarn goes into cloth, and the cloth into shirts and dresses and sheets. Byproducts of many agricultural products yield glycerin, fatty acids, enzymes, hormones, and many other chemicals.

A related function is *packaging*. Its primary purpose is to place the products in convenient forms for shipment, storage, or sale. Prepackaging of perishable products before they are put on retail display is a fast growing development.

Because agricultural production is seasonal, the products have to be stored for distribution later. The *storage* function involves risks -- risks of deterioration of products and risks of fluctuating

² This discussion is taken from Marketing the Year book of Agriculture - 1954, U.S. Department of Agriculture, pp. 6-8.

market prices. Elaborate precautions are taken to guard against any deterioration of products from excessive moisture, heat, contaminating metals, bacteria and fungi, insects, and rodents and against loss from fire and theft.

Whether a stored commodity is held by a farmer, a warehouseman, a processor, a wholesaler, or a retailer, the risk of a drop in the market price is always present. Various devices are used to shift *the risk* or to spread the risk.

For certain commodities, such as wheat and cotton, the farmers can get Government nonrecourse loans. The farmers can redeem the loans and sell when prices are good. Or they may permit the Government to take title to the commodity at the loan-maturity date; then the farmers have received the benefit of the full loan value. The Government assumes all market price risk below the loan value.

Another device is to sell products for later delivery. A wheat miller might sell flour to bakeries for later delivery at the price prevailing when he bought the wheat. The deferred delivery period might be 30 days to 6 months depending on buyers' needs and willingness to run the risk of falling prices.

A more widely used device is the buying and selling of futures contracts on the commodities exchange. All individuals or firms holding agricultural commodities for which futures markets are available may guard -- "hedge" -- against price changes. Essential marketing services are performed by the people who run the futures exchange and enforce its trading rules, the brokers who act as agents on the floor of the exchange, and the speculators who assume the risks and thus make hedging possible.

Retailers are protected to a degree against change in price by the practice of pricing goods on the basis of a specific markup over the acquisition cost. The practice is not always feasible on a highly competitive market; customers may not pay the price. Pricing goods for rapid turnover is another way in which retail distributors can reduce price risks.

Another major role of marketing relates to *change in ownership*. Agricultural goods, like most other goods, have value only in terms of their usefulness -- utility -- to consumers. The pricing and exchange functions associated with possession are the heart of marketing.

Pricing is the determination of market values in terms of money. Buyers and sellers at a given time agree on a common evaluation. Prices may vary from day to day or hour to hour, depending on demand and supply. But, in time, prices of different commodities seek different levels in

accordance with the relative utilities of the commodities and their costs. A ton of wheat contains more nutrients than a ton of hay and costs more to produce. Thus, the price of a ton of wheat ordinarily is about three times the price of a ton of hay.

Exchange involves the transfer of ownership -- goods for money or goods for goods. Most exchange transactions are concluded with the payment of money, although some barter exchange is practiced among countries having centrally controlled trading agencies.

Many people and agencies are engaged in the exchange of agricultural products. The courts stand ready to enforce rules of fair dealing. Commercial banks provide credit for the shipment of products and to finance processing and storage. The futures market is available to help in spreading the market price risk. Several auxiliary services are performed to facilitate pricing and exchange, including sanitary inspection, dissemination of market news, and market forecasting. Foreign marketing in U.S. agriculture is playing a significant role in the international economy, and world markets are of increasing importance to U.S. agriculture. Never before have international affairs and agricultural problems been more closely entwined.

Another service is the grading of products by recognized *standards* of quality. Grading helps farmers get fair prices for their products. It also permits commercial buyers to make purchases of such products as milk, butter, eggs, and meat on a basis of quality and price.

Wholesaling *and retailing*, two essential services, are performed on the widest scale possible. They reach every community. Wholesale assembly and distribution particularly is a key activity in the whole marketing system, since the wholesale market represents the focal point in the flow of goods from producer to consumer.

Price changes and the surpluses or shortages of specific products are often first noted in wholesale channels. The wholesaler to a certain extent determines the market price. If more pork is offered through trade channels than consumers will take at a given price the wholesaler promptly reduces his price bid to packing houses; prices paid for live hogs on the one hand, and for wholesale cuts of pork on the other, will decline. Reduced prices to consumers are thus made possible, and a larger supply of pork will be absorbed. An opposite action will occur, with rising prices to producers and consumers, when pork becomes scarce.

Besides assembling a wide assortment of products, the wholesaler also may extend short-term credit to buyers. Often he assists retailers in solving merchandising problems. Sometimes wholesalers prepackage products.

Retailing is the final link in the distribution chain. Several hundred thousand retail foodstores and additional thousands of department, dry goods, and cigar stores and other specialty stores

throughout the country satisfy day-to-day consumer requirements for food and other products of agricultural origin.

Retailing has undergone dynamic change in a few decades. Regional and national chainstore organizations have grown rapidly. In our automobile age, retail stores have become fewer and larger. They also have enlarged their services to buyers.

Retailers, wholesalers, processors, farmer cooperatives and farm organizations and trade associations are engaged in merchandising farm products. Merchandising, defined by the American Marketing Association as "the planning involved in marketing the right merchandise or service at the right place, at the right time, in the right quantities, and at the right price," involves promotional activities -- attractive packaging and display, advertising, product differentiation in an effort to establish customer loyalty for brand names, competitive pricing, and personal salesmanship. A great deal of thought, effort and money goes into this activity; without it, some of the variety, freshness, and appeal of agricultural products now available to consumers would be lacking.

THE ROLE OF THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT IN AGRICULTURAL MARKETING

The marketing of agricultural commodities in the United States is done by a private enterprise system. It involves millions of individual decisions (to grow, to buy, to sell, to store, to ship) on the part of farmers, marketing men, and consumers.

Agricultural marketing is a huge national and international operation. The marketing system is intricate. It is sensitive to many economic and international developments, which include strikes, weather, political upheavals and related factors that affect marketing activities.

The marketing of agricultural commodities is undergoing dynamic changes. As our country has become an increasingly urban society, the marketing of agricultural products has become increasingly complex. It has moved from the era of the cracker-barrel, the butchershop, the grocery route and the delivery boy, to the era of self-service supermarkets, a network of high-speed highways, air transport, prepackaged meats, instant and frozen foods, etc.

Within this setting of a dynamic, private marketing system, the role of the Federal Government is to help keep the marketing of agricultural commodities flowing in an orderly and efficient manner, to promote effective distribution, to eliminate speculation and waste, and to stabilize the marketing of agricultural commodities. A brief summary of current programs and activities is given below. However, it must be realized that as the marketing system continues to evolve,

there will be corresponding changes in the programs, services or activities of the Federal Government.

COVERAGE

Qualification requirements are a prime consideration in determining positions covered by the GS-1146-0 Series. Positions are classifiable to this series when there is a requirement for incumbents to have a practical knowledge of the various marketing elements, functions and/or practices, or a knowledge of the requirements of one or more laws, acts or other statutory provisions relating to the particular program and/or commodity involved. Positions concerned with marketing activities, but which require incumbents to possess other professional or specialized knowledge (e.g., as an economist or botanist) are excluded from this series. Typical services, functions, or other activities performed by Agricultural Marketing Specialists are summarized below. (This listing is not all-inclusive due to the variety and changing nature of the various programs.)

A. *Developing or revising official U.S. standards of quality, condition, and identification of agricultural commodities, or products thereof.*

This involves research and investigational work concerned with the development of new or revision of existing class and grade standards, including such matters as: (1) gaining cooperation of producer, trade and consumer organizations; (2) factfinding to arrive at the terms and conditions suitable to the needs of the various elements of the industry; (3) investigation for such factors as requirements for storing and handling, designation under which the commodity is usually marketed, changes in methods of preparation, harvesting and marketing, new means of preserving quality or condition, sanitary requirements dealing with facilities and operating procedures and new methods of testing or grading. Additionally, this work also involves preparation of bulletins and other illustrative material depicting class and grade standards; and planning, directing, or conducting educational and demonstration programs relating to the use of Federal grade standards.

B. *Insuring compliance with regulatory laws to prevent unfair trade practices, to protect and preserve free and open competition, and to prevent chicanery and product misrepresentation, and to uncover fraud.*

This work is concerned with the administration and carrying out of regulatory acts pertaining to the marketing of various commodities (such as perishable fruits and vegetables, seeds, livestock, meat, poultry, etc.). Included are such matters as (1) the education of various elements, of the trade in the legal requirements of licensing, registration, and bonding; (2)

investigation of complaints, trade practices, and violations of regulatory acts; (3) the settling of complaints of unfair trade practices; 4) the investigation of fraudulent or discriminatory practices; (5) the preparation of investigative reports and assistance in legal actions in violation cases; (6) the supervision of futures trading on organized exchanges; and (7) licensing and auditing of brokerage houses.

C. *Formulation, promulgation, appraisal, and enforcement of marketing agreements and orders, designed to assist producers to regulate and standardize the marketing of agricultural products under the Agricultural Marketing Agreement Act of 1937.*

This work is concerned with such matters as: (1) the review and analysis of proposals submitted by industry groups; (2) attending public hearings and meetings with the public and industry groups; (3) conducting referenda; (4) establishing machinery for operation of agreements and orders; (5) preparing reports recommending administrative and regulatory action, and appropriate documents to achieve such action; (6) giving market administrators advice and assistance regarding the interpretation of orders and agreements, and administrative and procedural matters; (7) interpretation and compliance with marketing regulations; and (8) program appraisal and qualifications of cooperatives.

D. *Performing technical research to improve marketing facilities and equipment, packaging, handling, work methods and transportation at all stages from local assembly through wholesaling and retailing.*

This involves the performance of research activities such as (1) developing plans for, and promoting the construction of proper kinds of marketing and storage facilities for all kinds of farm and food products at specific localities at various stages in the marketing channels; determining the type, size, location, design, cost and method of financing and operation best suited for the specific locations, and the financial soundness of the proposed facilities; (2) determining the adequacy and efficiency of different shipping methods and types of shipping containers, various types of equipment, devices utilized in transportation and related handling of various agricultural products; (3) describing, collecting, or discovering facts with respect to particular agricultural marketing situations; explaining, interpreting, and evaluating these facts; projecting and making forecasts of certain of the results; analyzing or evaluating these facts; projecting and making forecasts of certain of the results; analyzing or evaluating

alternative marketing methods and procedures; and establishing general principles for the marketing of agricultural commodities; (4) preparing for dissemination reports and educational material pertaining to research findings; advising on, assisting, and promoting the use of new techniques or methods developed through research.

- E. *Effective distribution of edible agricultural commodities for the purpose of expanding current and future markets for food (and, as a corollary, to improve national dietary levels).*

This involves work such as: (1) development, administration, or supervision of food distribution programs designed to increase the efficiency of the production and marketing system, and the need to make constructive use of food that finds its way into Government inventories or ownership; (2) dealings with producer and marketing groups to promote the sale and use of seasonally and other abundant foods; (3) the solution of distributive problems of the normal trade channels.

(Note: Positions concerned with the distribution of food which *do not* require a knowledge of agricultural marketing functions or practices *should not* be classified to the GS-1146 Series.)

- F. *Administration of the Federal-State Marketing Service Matching Fund Program. (States taking part in the program receive Federal funds which they match with State dollars to provide a practical marketing service program at the State level.*

This work involves such matters as: (1) providing leadership and consulting services to assist States in the development of sound marketing service projects and coordinating similar lines of work between States; (2) reviewing and recommending approval or rejection of proposed projects; and (3) reviewing progress and assuring maintenance of administrative and legal requirements.

- G. *Development, promotion, and retention of foreign market outlets for U.S. Agricultural products.*

This work includes such matters as: (1) analyzing and reporting on foreign markets (current and potential) for specific commodities produced and exported or imported by the United States; (2) conducting surveys in foreign areas of the actual and potential international supply and demand situation; (3) advising U.S. producers, exporters and Government authorities on foreign market prospects and programs and on actions which may affect adjustment of U. S. agricultural production; (4) providing advisory services to foreign producers, importers, exporters, processors, and Government officials on U.S. marketing and trade policies, practices and programs; (5) serving as a representative at international

commodity conferences and at domestic conferences on foreign commodity matters; and (6) providing a general review of the commodity aspects of USDA and private cooperator participation in foreign market development programs and projects.

H. *Development and administration of export programs sales and pricing policies.*

The work includes such functions as: (1) developing export sales and pricing policies relating to agricultural commodities and products thereof that will facilitate obtaining the U.S. share of world markets; (2) establishing commodity export subsidy rates which bridge the gap between domestic prices and foreign prices; (3) acquiring and evaluating domestic and foreign agricultural commodity price information to determine the competitive price position of U.S. commodities; (4) maintaining contacts with traders, exporters, and others concerning market conditions and foreign and domestic supply and demand situations; and (5) developing and conducting price review operations for Government-financed programs.

I. *Acquisition, inventory management, and disposal of agricultural products under price-support programs.*

Work is concerned with such matters as: (1) acquiring stock through the "takeover" of commodities pledged as collateral for price-support loans; or through purchases, either from processors or handlers, or from producers in connection with purchase agreements; (2) the orderly, economical and proper assignment of commodities to and/or from warehouses, vendors' plants, processing plants and program outlets, both domestic and export; (3) quality management of stocks, including cyclic inspections for condition, handling of salvage commodities, maintenance of records; (4) selection of commodities best suited by location, storage expiration, data, quality, quantity, etc., to meet sales requirements and to supply the various programs; (5) disposal of commodities through domestic and export sales for dollars, sales for foreign currencies, barter, payment-in-kind exports, transfers and donations.

SPECIALIZATIONS AND TITLING

Functional and commodity specializations are provided for use in titling positions to recognize particular knowledge and experience required in the performance of work assigned.

To facilitate recruitment, assignment, and optimum utilization of personnel, positions should be classified to the broadest possible field of specialization. Trainee positions at GS-S and GS-7 should be classified as Agricultural Marketing Specialists (General) unless there is a definite need for showing a functional or commodity specialization.

It is recognized that the responsibilities of certain positions require recruitment or appointment of persons with background or experience pertaining specifically to a particular commodity or commodities. In such instances, the commodity (from those listed below) is indicated in the classification title of the position in place of the word "agricultural", e.g., Cotton Marketing Specialist (Foreign). Use of the commodity specialization should be confined only to those cases in which it is *absolutely essential* that selection of persons to fill the positions must be limited to those having specialized experience in the commodity field.

Functional Specializations

1. *Agricultural Marketing Specialist (Merchandising)* for positions involved in trade promotion or liaison; work concerned with the purchase, exchange, sale, donation, or other disposal of agricultural commodities or products thereof, including sales by bid procedures, announcements or negotiations, or other work concerned with domestic sales, promotion, or market development.
2. *Agricultural Marketing Specialist (Commodity Management)* for positions involved in the storage and distribution management of agricultural commodities or products thereof; and quality management of stocks including cyclic inspections for condition and selection of commodities best suited by location, storage, expiration date, quality, quantity, etc. to meet sales and other program requirements.
3. *Agricultural Marketing Specialist (Agreements and Orders)* for positions concerned with the analysis, development, promulgation, administration, and enforcement of marketing agreement and order programs designed to carry out marketing plans to improve returns to growers of agricultural products.
4. *Agricultural Marketing Specialist (Foreign)* for positions concerned with the development, survey, promotion, or expansion of markets for U.S. agricultural commodities in foreign areas.
5. *Agricultural Marketing Specialist (Export Sales and Pricing)* for positions concerned with developing and carrying out export programs sales and pricing policies relating to U.S. surplus agricultural commodities or products thereof. This involves such considerations as differences between domestic and foreign market prices, export subsidies involved, and prices at which U.S. exporters and traders can sell surplus agricultural commodities in world markets.

6. *Agricultural Marketing Specialist (Regulatory)* for positions involved in enforcing compliance with provisions of laws and regulations designed to regulate or control reasonable services and to maintain fair and compatible practices in the marketing of agricultural commodities or products thereof.
7. *Agricultural Marketing Specialist (Research)* for positions concerned with the study and development of new, revised, or improved agricultural marketing practices, techniques, or procedures involved in or related to the marketing of agricultural commodities or products thereof.
8. *Agricultural Marketing Specialist (Standardization)* for positions concerned with the formulation, revision, or development of criteria, requirements or standards controlling the handling, processing, packaging, storing, grading, inspecting, etc. of agricultural commodities or products thereof.
9. *Agricultural Marketing Specialist (General)* for positions involved in the organization and planning of one or more programs, providing information, or taking action concerning basic marketing operations pertaining to a broad field of marketing. This also includes agricultural marketing work not specifically described or covered by another functional specialization.

Commodity specializations

Use of a commodity specialization is appropriate *only* when the duties of a position require application of a knowledge of the characteristics of the commodities, as well as background and experience in the methods and practices used in marketing the items. This standard provides for the use of the following commodity specializations:

- (1) Cotton;
- (2) Dairy Products;
- (3) Fats and Oils;
- (4) Fresh Fruit and Vegetable;
- (5) Processed Fruit and Vegetable;
- (6) Grain (including Rice);
- (7) Grain Products;
- (8) Livestock;
- (9) Meat;
- (10) Poultry;
- (11) Processed Agricultural Products;
- (12) Oil Seed;

- (13) Seed;
- (14) Tobacco.

(Note: The position classification standard for the [Agricultural Commodity Grading Series, GS-1980](#), contains a detailed discussion of the characteristics of most of these agricultural commodities.)

When positions are concerned with two commodities, both specializations may be shown in the title, e.g., Livestock and Meat Marketing Specialist. When the combination includes both fresh and processed fruit and vegetables, drop the modifiers and use the title Fruit and Vegetable Marketing Specialist. Use the specialization Processed Agricultural Products for combinations of processed commodities not included elsewhere.

Approval must be secured from the U.S. Civil Service Commission for the use of any commodity specialization not included above.

Supervisory positions

For position with significant supervisory responsibilities, the title should be constructed by use of the prefix "Supervisory" before the appropriate functional or commodity specializations. (This standard does not include criteria for classification of supervisory positions. As an aid in determining the appropriate guide, work in this series is considered properly classifiable at two-grade intervals.)

THE EVALUATION PLAN

Classification criteria

Three classification factors are used in the evaluation plan for the nonsupervisory positions covered by this standard:

Factor 1 - Scope and impact of assignment. -- This factor reflects the scope and impact of the assignment with respect to the particular function and/or commodity with which it is concerned. The grade-level criteria are expressed largely in terms of (a) breadth or depth of assignment, i.e., individual cases or portions of projects; the full cycle of projects of more than average difficulty; or program formulation and development; and (b) impact of the assignment on the industry or economy, ranging from little or no impact to those having major economic or industrial significance.

Factor 2 - Availability of guidelines and originality required --This factor reflects (a) the extent to which an incumbent's assignments are governed by agency policies and precedent actions, and (b) the degree of judgment and originality required by the incumbent in developing or applying agency policies and procedures in the functional or commodity area assigned.

Factor 3 - Level of responsibility. -- This factor reflects (a) the kind of control exercised over the work of an incumbent by his supervisor, (b) the extent to which an incumbent is authorized to make recommendations or commit his organization on specific cases or to a course of action, and (c) the nature of person-to-person contacts.

Application of criteria contained in the factors

Positions are evaluated in terms of the criteria presented at the various degrees of the three basic factors. Three degrees of intensity are described for each of the three basic factors. These degrees are designated "A", "C", and "E". Intermediate degrees "B" and "D" are not described but are intended for use when appropriate. The use of degrees B and D is appropriate when a position clearly falls between two of the described degrees of a particular factor, or when, for example, a position compares with degree A in some respects and with degree C in others.

For ease of converting combinations of the various selected degree levels to appropriate GS-grade levels, point values have been assigned to each degree, i.e., all A degrees have a 2-point value, B degrees -- 4 points, C degrees -- 6 points, D degrees -- 8 points, and E degrees -- 10 points. The degree that best characterizes a position is selected for each factor. The point values for each of the three degrees selected are then totaled. The table below is to be used to convert the total point value for a position to the corresponding grade level.

It is not the intent of this standard to establish a ceiling grade of GS-14 for nonsupervisory positions. There may be positions that involve assignments which exceed to a significant extent the level of difficulty and responsibility represented by degree "E" in at least one of the factors in this standard. Positions involving such assignments should be evaluated by comparison with the criteria in this standard and by comparison with related positions classified under other published standards.

GRADE CONVERSION TABLE

Grade Level	Total Points
GS-05	4-8
GS-07	10-12
GS-09	12-16
GS-11	18-20
GS-12	22-24
GS-13	26-28
GS-14	30

Grade levels for typical combinations of the three factors are briefly described below. The descriptive terms used refer to the level of work, availability of guidelines, or responsibility contained in the degree definitions. That is: for Factor I, the terms "average", "more than average", or "most difficult" are defined in degrees A, C, and E, respectively; for Factor II, the terms "specific guidelines", "general guidelines", and "originality and development of guidelines" are defined in degrees A, C, and E, respectively; and for Factor III, the terms "trainee" or "limited responsibility", "journeyman", or "expert or consultant" are defined in degrees A, C, and E, respectively.

Also shown below is a graphic illustration of the different grade levels that result from a difference in guidelines or delegations of authority.

TYPICAL COMBINATIONS

GS-1146-05

This includes trainee positions for work of average difficulty, operating under specific guidelines. 6 point values assigned as follows: Factor I - 2; Factor II - 2; Factor III - 2.

GS-1146-07

This includes advanced trainee positions for work of average difficulty, operating under general guidelines. 10 point values assigned as follows: Factor I - 2; Factor II - 6; Factor III - 2.

This also includes a journeyman position for work of less than average difficulty, operating under general guidelines. 12 points assigned as follows: Factor I - 0; Factor II - 6; Factor III - 6.

GS-1146-09

This includes journeyman positions for work of average difficulty, operating under general guidelines. 14 points assigned as follows: Factor I - 2; Factor II - 6; Factor III - 6.

This also includes positions with limited responsibility for work of more than average difficulty, operating under general guidelines. 14 points assigned as follows: Factor I - 6; Factor II - 6; Factor III-2.

GS-1146-11

This includes journeyman positions for work of more than average difficulty, operating under general guidelines. 18 points assigned as follows: Factor I - 6; Factor II - 6; Factor III - 6.

GS-1146-12

This includes journeyman positions for work of more than average difficulty, with responsibility for originality and development of guidelines. 22 points assigned as follows: Factor I - 6; Factor II -10; Factor III - 6.

Also included are journeyman positions for the most difficult work, operating under general guidelines. 22 points assigned as follows: Factor I - 10; Factor II - 6; Factor III - 6.

GS-1146-13

This includes expert or consultant positions for work of more than average difficulty, with responsibility for originality and development of guidelines. 26 points assigned as follows: Factor I - 6; Factor II - 10; Factor III - 10.

This also includes journeyman positions for the most difficult work, with responsibility for originality and development of guidelines. 26 points assigned as follows: Factor I - 10; Factor II - 10; Factor III - 6.

GS-1146-14

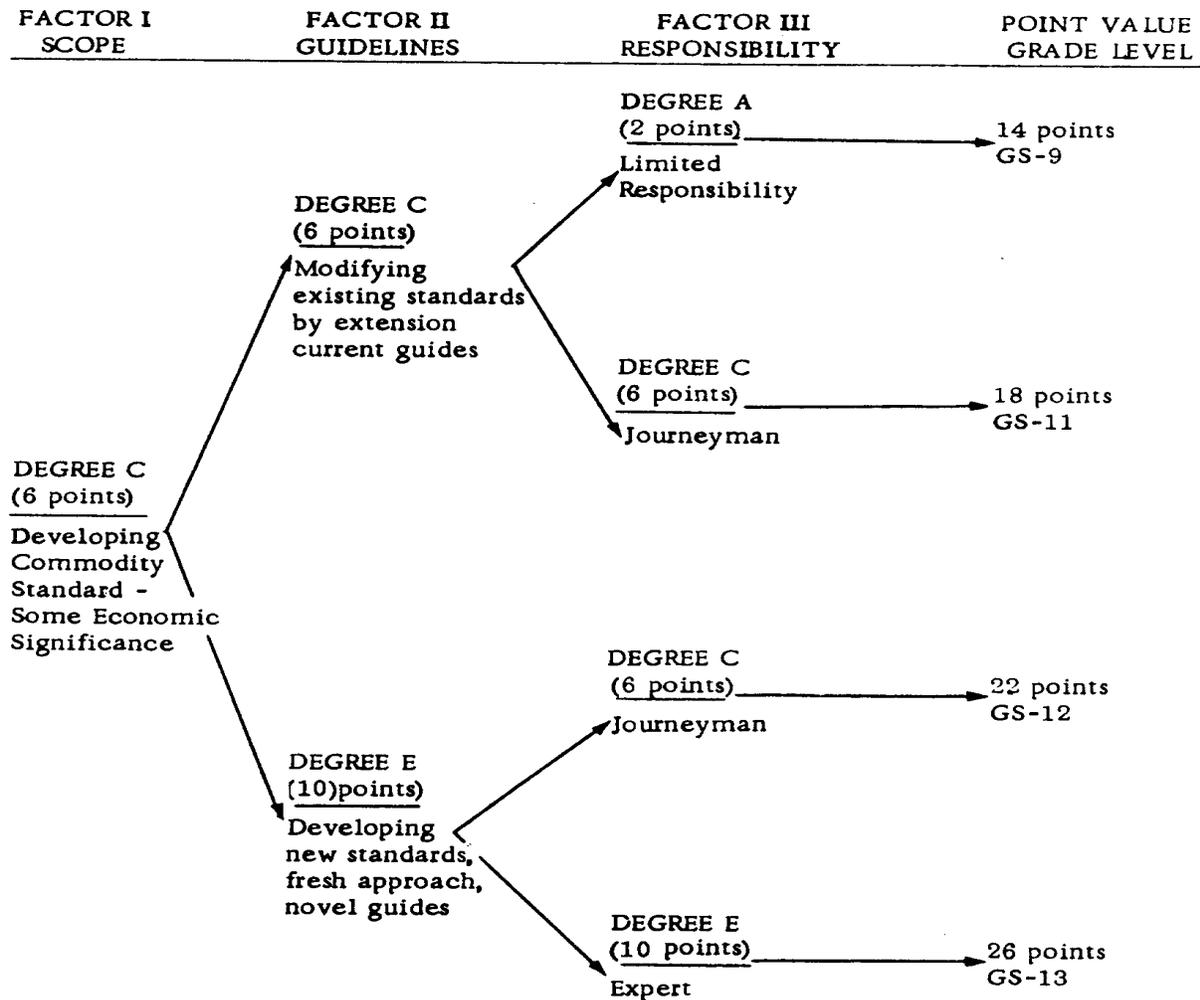
This includes expert or consultant positions for the most difficult work, with responsibility for originality and development of guidelines. 30 points assigned as follows: Factor I - 10; Factor II - 10; Factor III - 10.

ILLUSTRATION

Taking one assignment at Degree C of Factor I, the following illustration graphically portrays the different grade levels that can result from the influence of the availability of guidelines or originality required (Factor II) and the level of responsibility (Factor III).

FACTOR I - SCOPE AND IMPACT OF ASSIGNMENTS

The criteria under this Factor are developed in terms characteristic features of scope or impact that typically relate to the difficulty of the assignment. The criteria, however, must be applied



carefully in the context of the position so that credit is not given for features that do not contribute to the difficulty of the work performed.

For example, Degree C lists a number of characteristics which indicate work "above average" in difficulty. One of these is "marketing agencies that are somewhat complex, or have several primary or subsidiary activities." *The size or complexity of the marketing agencies is significant, however, only when they contribute to the difficulty of the work performed.* To illustrate: for assignments involving complaints of unfair trade practices size of the organization is not significant if the complaints are clear-cut and complexity of the organization is not a matter complicating the resolution of the complaint. By contrast, in other complaints, complexity of the organization is a significant Factor when it is necessary to consider interrelationship of the various activities of the organization in order to pinpoint responsibility for or to correct an unfair trade practice. Similarly, other features which typically indicate a broader scope of assignment, such as quantity or diversity of commodities, area covered, etc., are significant only when they contribute to the difficulty of the work being done.

Each degree for Factor I contains examples of marketing specialist work assignments. These are not detailed job descriptions. Rather, they are intended to portray situations in which the criteria (characteristic features of the degree) have increased the breadth, depth, or difficulty of the work. In most instances, examples in similar functions or services are given to illustrate progression to each degree. These are not intended to be all-inclusive of the various work situations covered by this standard. Thus, the absence of an example for a particular work assignment at one of the degree levels does not preclude use of the standard in evaluating the position.

*DEGREE A (2 points)*³

This level typically includes assignments of average difficulty. These may be specific operating assignments, or clearly defined segments of higher level work which are usually integrated into the total project or program by a *higher level* marketing specialist.

Assignments of average difficulty require a specialized knowledge of one or more aspects of agricultural marketing; of one or more agricultural commodities, or products thereof; or of one or more statutory provisions relating to the marketing of agricultural products.

Scope of assignments at Degree A are characterized by *some* of the following features. (These are not all-inclusive, but rather are intended to be illustrative of this level.)

- (1) Assignments involve individual cases, problems, complaints, short-term projects, or assigned phases of broader studies which are generally clearly defined, compatible with

³ Assignments of less than average difficulty (e.g., portions of Degree A work) will be assigned 0 points.

stated objectives, follow techniques or practices which have been provided, or result in few ramifications into other areas of work.

- (2) Assignments are governed by predetermined limitations, authorized conditions, or other restrictions. These may relate to an assigned area, local situation, or timing of the action; to a limited variety, quantity, or condition of the commodities; or to the individuals, parties, or firms directly concerned.
- (3) Assignments seldom involve resolution of problems dealing with (a) delicate issues, e.g., involving social, economic, or political implications; (b) sudden or unexpected developments, e.g., caused by accidents or weather conditions; or (c) other complicating situations arising from controversies, ambiguities, obscurities, or other intricate issues.

The following illustrate work assignments of marketing specialists at this level:

- a. Investigate complaints of unfair trade practices, such as failure to deliver a commodity in accordance with terms of a contract, failure to correctly account and pay for items purchased on consignment, misbranding or misrepresenting the commodity, or dumping or destroying consigned goods without reasonable cause. Review or investigate operations of various market agencies, packers, dealers, licensees, etc., to insure that they are operating in accordance with laws and regulations and that they are not engaged in unfair trade practices. Usually at this level alleged violations are relatively clear-cut, there are a limited number of marketing transactions involved, problems are few or limited in diversity, organizations involved have few subsidiary activities, there is limited involvement of other persons or organizations, few separate investigations grow out of the original complaint.
- b. Conduct assigned phases of the acquisition, movement, distribution, disposal, or control of surplus commodities. For example: (1) odd-lot sales (less than carload lot) representing the total of a particular kind or grade of grain at a warehouse, with the price established according to a formula and negotiated with warehouseman based on local market value;

(2) on-track sales of carloads of commodities offered for sale under current authorized conditions, on a competitive bid basis, with sale to highest bidders determined by an analysis of market conditions, prices, freight involved, and conditions of sale; (3) commodity management, involving a determination of the specific facility or market, within predetermined limitations,

from which grain should be moved to meet the time requirements of sales, reconcentration needs and program termination dates. Determinations made, in part, on the basis of warehouse capabilities, traffic rates, transit rights, availability of cars, demurrage, etc. Provide necessary quantity and quality needed to fulfill predetermined commitments and consider effect of over or under application.

- c. In connection with the development of marketing agreements and orders, deal personally with members of the industry in factfinding, explaining policies and arranging committee meetings or hearings, prepare data for use of higher grade specialists in the investigation of requests for hearings, assist at hearings by providing information and examining witnesses, and prepare reports and abstracts of hearings.
- d. With regard to the development or revision of commodity standards, gather data on various marketing methods, practices, and facilities. Consolidate the data and present it with recommendations for changes in the standard. Marketing specialists at this level may be assigned segments of the revised standards or specifications to develop, or complete projects in which a commodity of minor economic significance is involved. Also develop portions of manuals or other training devices for demonstrations to be given by Federal or State inspectors, graders, and others.
- e. Are assigned specific segments of research projects or special studies concerning handling, inspecting, packaging, shipping, storage, or any other aspect related to the marketing of agricultural commodities. Prepare plans and develop procedures, gather data, and analyze data. Make tentative interpretations and recommendations for improved marketing facilities for use by higher grade marketing specialists.

Impact

Impact of assignments typically are limited. For example:

- (1) They have little or no economic significance (e.g., disposal of odd-lots or restricted amounts of surplus commodities do not affect market conditions or prices);

- (2) Cases or problems on which decisions are made have no widespread impact, or are confined to the parties concerned (e. g., investigation of a complaint resulting in an agreed settlement to pay for merchandise received affects only the buyer or seller of the merchandise);
- (3) Changes in operation resulting from a survey, investigation, or review of marketing agencies, etc., are generally confined to the local plant or a specified area;
- (4) Actions do not involve new precedents;
- (5) There is limited public interest.

DEGREE C (6 points)

This level exceeds Degree A in breadth or depth of assignment, or both, and regularly encompasses work of more than average difficulty.

Most assignments involve the full cycle of work concerned with a project or segment of a program established and directed by a higher level organization (based, for example, on functional phase, commodity subdivision, or geographic area). Some assignments may involve portions of work described at Degree E when they meet this level of difficulty.

Work is considered of *more than average difficulty* when it requires the application of a high degree of technical skill, knowledge, and judgment related to *one or more* of the following: (a) to the commodity/commodities or products thereof that are involved; (b) to the particular marketing functions, services, facilities, practices, or methods involved (such as merchandising, standardization, or some area of research); (c) to the agricultural trade or marketing agencies involved, or, (d) to the statutory provisions regarding the particular program or commodity involved.

More specifically, *scope* of assignments at Degree C are characterized by *some* of the following features. They are significant in evaluating degree level, however, only when they contribute to the difficulty of the position (see also page 18). These characteristics are not all-inclusive, but rather are intended to be illustrative of this degree of difficulty.

- (1) Assignments (a) are relatively wide in diversity; (b) relate to large quantities of commodities, or commodities of some economic significance; (c) relate to industries, firms, or other marketing agencies that are somewhat complex, or have several primary or

subsidiary activities; or (d) cover a relatively wide geographic area or a segment of the marketing industry. This contrasts with Degree A, where assignments are governed by predetermined limitations, authorized conditions, or other restrictions.

- (2) Assignments involve (a) some ramifications into other issues or areas of study; (b) issues that are not clearly discernible or which require study or investigation to uncover obscure or concealed facts; (c) varying degrees of controversy; or (d) interrelated elements or interlocking companies or other entanglements which require consideration of the effect of the action taken on other individuals, firms, marketing agencies, functions, etc. This contrasts with Degree A, where assignments are generally clearly defined and involve few ramifications.
- (3) Assignments involve the resolution of problems requiring (a) resourcefulness and creativity in recognizing trends and marketing situations that may have economic, social, or political implications; (b) initiative and knowledge to recommend decisions to meet unexpected developments or changed conditions, created, e.g., by accidents, weather, etc.; (c) judgment and perception to recognize, understand, and explain significant variations in commodity markets; or (d) analysis and evaluation of marketing conditions or situations to provide additional data or observations about commodities or marketing facilities and services, or to recommend new or revised criteria, methods, or technique. This contrasts with Degree A, where assignments seldom involve resolution of delicate issues, unexpected developments, changed conditions or otherwise complicated problems.

The following examples illustrate the scope of work assignments at this level:

- a. Marketing specialists are assigned complaints of unfair trade practices which are considered of more than average difficulty. They conduct or participate as a full team member in investigations which are complicated because of insufficient or conflicting records and/or violations over a long period of time and/or the number of traders involved whose responsibility in the complaint is not easily established. Other complaints of more than average difficulty may stem from (1) relatively large marketing agencies which have a number of primary or subsidiary activities; (2) a wide geographic area involving major concern with activities on a regional basis, or sometimes a nationwide basis; or (3) an industry, involving a variety of market agencies, dealers, packers, licensees, etc.
- b. Marketing specialists are assigned projects to develop and recommend drafts of new or revised standards for a specific commodity, or products thereof, of some economic significance; or for a group of minor commodities. Included are standards for equipment, facilities, and operating procedures, and educational and training aids in connection with

proper application of the standards. The marketing specialists gather data, evaluate them and prepare recommendations for new or revised standards. Projects as signed at this level involve some ramifications, varying degrees of controversy interrelated elements requiring consideration of the action on marketing of the item, judgment and perception to recognize and incorporate significant variations in the particular commodity.

- c. Marketing specialists are assigned individual research projects to improve or extend present methods or techniques, or are assigned portions of novel or extensive projects. These include projects to find better ways to measure quality; to maintain quality of products on their way to market; to find more efficient methods of marketing and better facilities. They evaluate and interpret data collected, and recommend changes in emphasis or direction based on their findings.
- d. Marketing specialists negotiate sales of grain located various country positions. Price is an important consideration which involves setting the higher of the following (1) the local market price; (2) the price the buyer would realize by shipping the commodity to various distant markets; or (3) the statutory or administrative minimum price. The sale of grain may be consummated on long-distance phone conversations in short periods of time. The marketing specialist must consider, e.g., (a) grading standards on which to make price determinations for premiums and discounts; (b) location of buyer as location differential of cost per bushel may exist depending upon transportation costs; (c) potential value of grain due to railroad serving warehouse, changing marketing patterns based on crop yield, total production, and consumption areas, and rate; (d) freight rate structures, territories, restrictions and marketing potential of various freight lines; (e) grain mixing potentials of purchasers to assure best return to the Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC). The marketing specialist must continually analyze the trade reaction to CCC disposition to assure adequate evaluation of the price effect of CCC disposition activity. Premium and discounts vary with supply and demand of commodities and conditions of crop at harvest, requiring ability to observe these conditions as they occur and apply them in negotiation and price analysis. Traffic considerations include rail, barge and truck.
- e. Marketing specialists are assigned individual projects to develop procedures, sales announcements, contracts, forms, handbooks, and other instructions pertaining to a commodity or functional segment of the price support (loan and purchase) program operations to be carried out in the field. Develops regulations containing basic provisions for use by agency field offices, producers and other interested trade groups.

Impact

Assignments typically have a fairly wide impact, are of a relatively serious nature, or have some economic significance -- whereas at Degree A work has limited impact, little or no economic significance, limited public interest. For example:

- (1) Actions taken may affect a segment of the public, an industry in a particular community, a marketing agency or operation area or nationwide (e.g., revision of commodity standards regarding the amount of meat or poultry in a canned product will affect all manufacturers of the product).
- (2) Actions contribute to the stability of markets, price or availability of commodities to the consumer, processing facilities for the particular project, returns to growers of a particular crop, production trends, marketing practices, consumer acceptance, etc. (e.g., disposal of huge quantities of surplus commodities contributes to stabilization of prices).
- (3) Actions have considerable interest from a segment of the public or may call for formal hearings (e.g., issuance of marketing orders for products of some economic significance).

DEGREE E (10 points)

Assignments at this level exceed Degree C in breadth of program responsibility. They involve responsibility for broad marketing program(s) in a functional or commodity area -- in contrast to assignments at Degree C which include projects of more than averages difficulty.

Assignments at this level require extended specialized training and experience, and knowledge of either a substantial variety of marketing activities or commodities, or a highly specialized marketing function, service, program, or commodity area.

Assignments at Degree E are characterized by work such as (1) formulation and development of recommendations for policies, program plans and operations; (2) complex factual or policy issues in drafting, interpretation, or application of legislation, regulations, contracts, orders or decisions; or (3) directing and coordinating the execution of approved policies and programs for major commodities on a nationwide basis.

Assignments at this level may deal with matters of such scope and complexity that they require the efforts of several marketing specialists. In such circumstances, specialists are normally responsible for directing, coordinating, and reviewing the work of the team. (Positions with substantial supervisory responsibilities should be evaluated by reference to Part II of the Supervisory Grade Evaluation Guide.)

Examples of assignments at this level include:

- a. Marketing specialists involved in enforcing compliance with provisions of regulatory laws, rules, statutory acts, etc. have responsibility for the development of national program plans and procedures for major segments of regulatory activities; and the coordination of these activities through the review of case reports and actual participation in critical phases of investigations and negotiations.
- b. Marketing specialists are responsible for formulation, development, or revision of criteria, requirements, standards or specifications controlling the handling, processing, packaging, storing, grading, inspecting, etc., of a major group of agricultural commodities which have important economic significance; also, for interpretation of complex questions relating to the application of the standards and specifications.
- c. Marketing specialists are responsible for a major area of marketing research, such as marketing facilities, transportation, or packaging, which encompass a number of projects aimed at solving important economic problems in the marketing of agricultural commodities.
- d. Marketing specialists are responsible for the formulation of marketing agreements and orders for commodities of major economic significance where large numbers of producers are involved and powerful interests of the trade are directly concerned the marketing order includes complex provisions difficult to administer relating to such items as volume controls and set asides as well as quality, size, and container requirements; there are substantial and wide spread disagreements between important segments of the trade.
- e. For an assigned commodity, commodity area and related products, marketing specialists plan, conduct, analyze and report on surveys, investigations and negotiations in principal consuming areas of the world for the purpose of developing and expanding foreign outlets for U.S. agricultural exports and providing domestic producers, processors, cooperative and trade associations, exporters, Government officials and farm organizations with timely information, analyses and interpretations on foreign market situations, trade opportunities, and current and long-range marketing problems and prospects. Such duties involve travels in foreign countries throughout the world for the purpose of contacting foreign government officials, importers, processors, distributors and consumer groups; and also meetings with

U.S. producers, processors, cooperative and trade associations, exporters and farm organizations.

- f. Marketing specialists formulate and develop on a national basis operational policy and program recommendations, program plans and operations (i.e., terms, conditions, prices), internal agency instructions, etc., relative to procurement, sale, or other disposition of a major commodity/commodities (for domestic use, foreign aid and exports) either owned by or to be procured by the Federal Government. Analyze and provide technical advice relative to the impact of major legislation or policy changes.

Impact

Impact of assignments typically are extensive in range, influence, or applicability; or have major economic significance. For example:

- (1) Actions taken have a major impact on the rates, practices or competitive position of a major industry. Large numbers of producers are involved and powerful interests of the trade are directly concerned with any program that may become operative. Substantial and widespread disagreement between important segments of the trade, characterized by rivalries, propagandizing, pressure groups, etc., and conflicting forces tend to hinder or complicate the purposes and administration of the program.
- (2) Actions significantly affect domestic or world markets, international trade relationships, or broaden or restrict the activities of private corporations, producers, trade groups, etc. (such as the establishment of conditions, terms, and prices for sale of commodities to foreign countries).
- (3) Actions have an important impact on major private or public interests (such as Food for Peace plans; promoting sales of surplus commodities; introducing net commodities to the market; development of new products from surplus commodities;

-- resulting in expansion of private industries, and in developing and bringing trade opportunities to the attention of U.S. exporters so that they may take advantage of them).

FACTOR 2 - AVAILABILITY OF GUIDELINES AND ORIGINALITY REQUIRED

DEGREE A (2 points)

Work is performed within a framework of specific operating procedures or instructions. The matters on which actions are taken deal recurrently with similar situations or problems. Usually they are covered by well-fixed or clear-cut regulations, guidelines, or precedent decisions.

DEGREE C (6 points)

By comparison with Degree A, where assignments usually are governed by specific, well-fixed, or clear-cut instructions or guidelines, this level calls for interpretation, adaptation, or modification of general instructions or guidelines.

Assignments are performed within the limits of the objectives established by the organization having overall program responsibility. These objectives and the *general* means of their accomplishment are set forth in various forms, such as mission and policy statements, delegations of authority, procedural manuals, or operating instructions.

Marketing specialists at this level are required to *use experienced judgment, consistent with the duties of the position*, in the application, interpretation, or adaptation of these guidelines. In other positions, marketing specialists must use originality in the application of standard practices, methods or techniques to normal operating situations; or, occasionally, in the modification or development of guidelines for methods or procedures not covered by agency instructions.

To apply the governing objectives and directives to the specific assignments he is given, the employee must thoroughly understand the role of his position in relation to the general aims of the program. He must be cognizant of the characteristics and peculiarities of the particular commodity or industry with which his assignments are concerned, and of the immediate effects of his activities.

DEGREE E (10 points)

Need for originality is the keynote of this level. In contrast to Degree C (which covers the interpretation, adaptation, or modification of general instructions or guidelines) there is:

- (a) responsibility for development of new or revised guidelines which require the use of initiative, ingenuity, and imagination in devising new, original, or fresh approaches, criteria, features, schemes of attack, or other novel methods or techniques; or
- (b) the greater need for independent interpretation and adaptation of guidelines where complex, novel or highly controversial issues are involved, or where guidelines are lacking or precedents are not available.

Guidelines include regulatory and directive material, standards, systems and procedures, or other instructions for establishment and implementation of agency programs. In developing, interpreting, or adapting guidelines, this level includes (1) explaining the needs or purposes which the agency program must serve with respect to Government and industry; (2) analysis and interpretation of enabling statutes, orders, or other regulations; (3) translation of these into proposed documents or rendering decisions which will govern the activities or the operating offices which carry out the program(s). This requires anticipation of the overall effect of the program and the action which the agency must take to get the program into operation. In carrying out such assignments, the marketing specialist must apply a thorough knowledge of the organization which has responsibility for program direction, its administrative and operational framework, and its specific relationships to other agencies having kindred functions and programs. He must also have a comprehensive knowledge and understanding of the way in which that segment of industry with which his assignment is concerned is affected by the programs of his agency.

FACTOR 3 - LEVEL OF RESPONSIBILITY

DEGREE A (2 points)

Responsibility at this level is limited. Positions typically include portions of higher level work, or employees are in training for higher level duties.

Work assignments, objectives, and methods are prescribed. The supervisor gives detailed instructions concerning new or complex situations to be encountered, and answers questions concerning applicability or interpretation of guides. Work is reviewed and checked to an extent sufficient to keep the supervisor constantly and affirmatively aware that instructions and methods are being understood and followed. Completed written work is usually thoroughly reviewed for errors, omissions, or inadequacies.

Commitment authority is generally restricted to making decisions when standards, guides, or instructions are non-controversial. Employees are responsible for the accuracy of factual information. Standards, reports, or other written matters are not expected to be in finished form except for relatively routine assignments.

The nature and extent of personal contacts are limited. Contacts are generally with other marketing specialists and supervisors, or with individuals, local firms, or their representatives. Purpose of these contacts, for example, is to gather facts, obtain information, interview claimant, explain the benefits of marketing programs, initially discuss ways and means of improving specific marketing methods, practices, etc.

DEGREE C (6 points)

Positions Typically Are at the Journeyman or Full Performance Level.

These positions function under general technical supervision. Work assignments and objectives are prescribed, but methods of accomplishment are seldom reviewed or controlled while work is in progress. Most problems of detail that arise in the day-to-day operations are resolved by the employee. Problems arising from controversial situations, obsolete guides, lack of guides, policy questions are referred to the supervisor for resolution. Upon the assignment of new kinds of work or unusual cases or problems, the employee is given general guidance on objectives to be achieved, and on approaches or methods that may be followed in reaching those objectives. Completed work is reviewed or spot-checked for technical adequacy, acceptability, and completeness.

Within well-defined bounds of delegated authority, and in accordance with directives that indicate normal courses to be followed, takes final action on cases or problems which constitute his regularly assigned functions. Recommendations to those outside the agency or to administrative officials at higher levels are normally made through the supervisor.

Personal contacts are an important aspect of these positions. Contacts are made with a variety of officials in both governmental and industrial circles. Included, for example, are contacts with other Federal, State, and municipal officials; individual growers, shippers, processors, brokers, receivers, and other industry representatives; with State marketing officials, Agricultural Experiment Station officials, college and university faculty members and other scientists; or with representatives of foreign governments and representatives of schools, business firms and industry groups from foreign countries. Personal contacts are for the purpose of securing, furnishing, or exchanging information, advice, cooperation or assistance on the work being done; securing agreements, negotiating sales, etc.

DEGREE E (10 points)

Included at this Level Are Positions of Expert Consultants and Technical Advisers.

Employees function under administrative supervision with considerable freedom from supervisory control over sequences of assignment, planning and organizing details of work, or deciding methods to produce a given result. As the technical expert in his field, the specialist resolves most questions or situations that arise. Only technical matters affecting agency policy or of far reaching import are referred to higher levels for decision. Work is reviewed primarily for overall effectiveness and compliance with general policies and procedures.

Broad commitment authority exists at this level. Employees assume responsibility for commitment of the agency to action of a substantive or technical nature within the bounds of the mission of the agency and its administrative policies. Included is responsibility for recognizing when matters are of a policy or precedent-setting nature, or of such delicacy or importance that advice must be cleared through, or secured from higher levels of authority.

This level is characterized by the most responsible personal contacts. Employees confer or negotiate with high level administrative or executive personnel in the agency, private business, or State, local or foreign governments. Diplomacy, effectiveness, and competence of a high order are required, for example, in explaining and securing acceptance of new programs, policies, processes or techniques; or in negotiating conflicts in opinion between interested parties or in resolving controversial cases when the issue involved has a major impact on widespread industrial or public interests.